

## COLLEGE IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

### OVERVIEW

Colleges of Education (CoEs) need to undertake rigorous and effective planning to strengthen their practices against seven quality indicators of leadership and management. This will enable them to recruit the strongest possible candidates as student teachers and provide a high quality education combining both content and pedagogical skills. The next generation of Ghana's teachers will thus be quipped to succeed in improving the learning of Ghana's schoolchildren.

To assist with this process, T-TEL is focusing on strengthening the leadership and management functions of colleges. College Improvement Planning is one of the key strategies T-TEL is using through its Leadership Programme by combining quality assurance and professional development approaches to support college leadership to drive towards higher standards and full functioning tertiary status.

A key part of this is supporting CoE Leadership teams and Governing Councils to devise and implement College Improvement Plans (CIPs). These robust and logical plans assist colleges to identify and bridge gaps in their systems and operations and their professional and academic development. They also enable leadership to set out their own roadmaps to becoming successful Colleges of Education and tertiary institutions – a goal that aligns with the Ministry of Education's policy for colleges and the teacher education sector as a whole.

This policy brief provides information on the College Improvement Planning process and how this will contribute to the transformation of teaching and learning in Ghana.



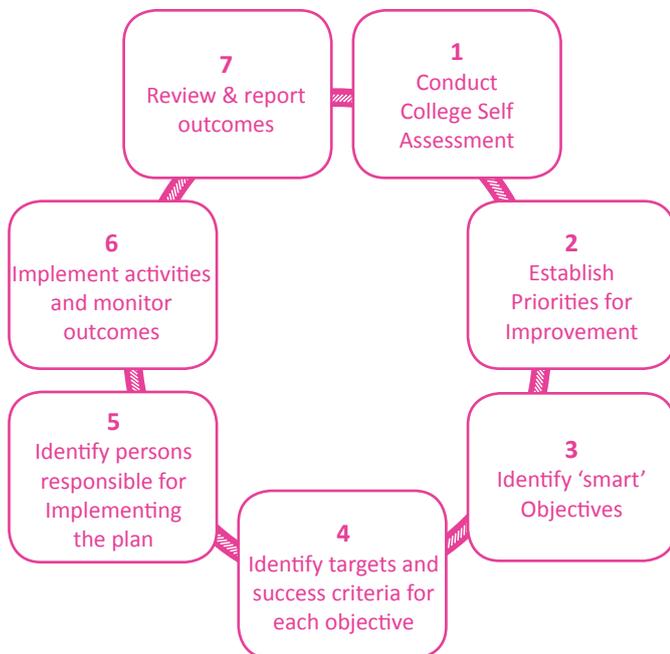
## WHAT IS INVOLVED IN A COLLEGE IMPROVEMENT PLAN?

**College Improvement Planning** is a process of supported critical review and self-reflection. College teams have been working together to review evidence and identify priorities for improvement, which then become established as an annual self-assessment and planning cycle that will be validated by the governing councils of each college.

Following the Leadership training provided to all CoE leadership teams 'Setting a New Direction', CoEs have been supported by their College Improvement Advisors to develop a **College Improvement Plan (CIP)**. This is the first time colleges have taken this formal step to improve specific institutional aspects in their journey to full tertiary status.

The overall process of developing the CIP has **7 stages**:

1. Conduct the self-assessment
2. Establish priorities for improvement
3. Identify "smart" objectives
4. Identify targets and success criteria for each objective
5. Identify those responsible for implementing the plan
6. Implement activities and monitor outcomes
7. Review and report outcomes



The first step in the College improvement process is for **the CoE to carry out a self-assessment**. T-TEL has developed a toolkit including templates to guide colleges to conduct the self-assessment, based on the seven components of the Quality Assurance (QA) framework, developed in consultation with NAB and NCTE.



After self-assessment is completed and the findings validated, CoEs choose a few priority areas to focus on within three of the seven QA components. With the support of the CIAs, these priorities have been integrated into the CIP, planned for implementation over 2 semesters.

College improvement targets against specific objectives (reflecting the priority areas) are agreed as part of the validation process, to be met by the end of the year. Within each CoE, key staff are designated to lead the chosen CIP improvement initiatives and be held accountable for its success. In addition, within each college it is anticipated that a cross-section of CoE governors will take part in both the self-assessment exercise and the subsequent improvement planning cycle.

The annual CIP will feed into a longer **3 to 5-year College Development Plan (CDP)**, developed as a result of T-TEL's interventions. These plans will be shared with the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) and National Accreditation Board (NAB) through the Colleges of Education Management Information System (CEMIS), currently under development by T-TEL in collaboration with NCTE.

## INCENTIVES TO AID IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLANS

To incentivise COEs to implement the improvement plan targets, T-TEL's Fund Programme is closely linked to the Leadership Programme. **T-TEL's 'Payment by Results' (PBR) fund is designed to incentivise CoEs to work towards their agreed College improvement targets in their CIP.** This will link the achievement of selected targets in the CIP to the disbursement of funds from the PBR Fund.



A second fund, **the Challenge Fund**, will provide financing for Colleges - alone or in partnerships - to **implement innovative activities that will contribute to improvements in teaching, learning, gender responsiveness and management quality in colleges.** Innovations may also be generated from college planning. Mechanisms have been established to encourage CoEs to work with each other and trusted local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in developing their innovations for funding support, in order for the CSO to build capacity in the CoE to manage development funds.

The responsibility for implementing agreed CIPs lies with each CoE leadership team and governing council. However, the CIA provides support and coaching to make sure necessary evidence is collected, plans are developed collaboratively and agreed CIP standards, planning and delivery deadlines are met. The CIAs are being intensively supported by T-TEL's Key Adviser.

Together the team of CIAs, the Key Adviser and Fund Manager provide a strong technical support team for the institutional planning process throughout the self-assessment, planning and improvement process.

## WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED SO FAR?

College Improvement Planning has already made significant progress. T-TEL's 11 College Improvement Advisors (CIAs) have been working closely with CoE leadership to improve their planning and implementing procedures.

Our recent achievements include:

- **100% Colleges represented by their leadership teams received 4 days of Systems Leadership Training** with a focus on Improvement Planning, Policy Formulation and Gender Responsive Management
- **Colleges have assessed their Gender Responsiveness** using a gender scorecard, and training on gender responsive budgeting and processes for developing a gender and inclusion and Sexual Harassment Policy
- **Colleges identified areas for improvement**, selected three priority areas and developed an initial plan
- **100% of colleges then submitted revised CIPs**
- The Leadership Programme Resource Unit 3: Leading Institutional Strengthening (Operations Leadership) has been developed to include **gender-responsive management focus**.
- **College Roadmapping of paths to fully tertiary institutions** has been captured in the Unit 3 Leadership Programme Resource material.
- In collaboration with NAB and NCTE, **Leadership and Quality Assurance of the Teaching Learning Handbook** has been developed.



## WHAT'S NEXT?

Two upcoming activities for T-TEL's Leadership and Management Programme work are worth noting by T-TEL stakeholders:

- 1. A 'Leading Institutional Strengthening Training Workshop'** with a specific focus on 'Operations Leadership' for college leadership teams. The workshop will equip college leaders with skills and strategies to help them implement aspects of their improvement plan, review implementation and plan for the next phase of improvement. Other key areas are integration of Roadmapping into CIP, Risk Management, Gender Mainstreaming, Accountability, Setting up Statutory Committees and the specific responsibilities of the College Principal and the Governing Council in driving improvement.
- 2. The signing of an MoU to include PBR Grant Agreement with all Colleges, with NCTE as a witness.** As part of their oversight responsibility to the colleges, NCTE provide monitoring support to the colleges so that agreed targets are implemented on time and any potential challenges for non-implementation are promptly identified and remedied where applicable.

Both these activities present stakeholders with opportunities to work with T-TEL to institutionalise improvement planning in educational institutions across Ghana, especially at the basic school level.

Improvement planning is an integral part of quality assurance, leadership and institutional development and creates the benchmark for measuring high quality standards and delivering excellence in education for Ghana's young people.

